

Report on Compliance with Court-Ordered Requirements

SNAP/APA

State of Alaska, Department of Health

April 1, 2025

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	3
II.	Federal Correspondence and Oversight.....	3
III.	Timely Processing of Applications	4
	A. Workload Data	4
	B. IT Modernization.....	6
	C. Staffing Improvements.....	7
IV.	Efforts to streamline administration of programs	9
	A. Attachment 2: Workload Management Matrix	9
V.	Conclusion	11
	Attachment 1: FFY 2024 Alaska RPT CAP Letter	13
	Attachment 2: Workload Management Matrix	18
	Attachment 3: Backlog Dashboard with Detail.....	27
	Attachment 4: Division of Public Assistance IT Modernization Roadmap.....	34
	Projects Completed to Date	37
	Projects Inflight.....	41
	Projects Queued Up: Working through Procurement.....	42
	Projects – ILINX Evolutions in Discussion	43
	Attachment 5: Status of Eligibility Technician Positions	45
	Attachment 6: Distribution and Status of Contracted Staff	52

I. Introduction

This third monthly report updates the court on the State of Alaska Department of Health's (DOH) ongoing efforts to comply with court orders and address delays in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Adult Public Assistance (APA) application processing. Building on the February and March reports, it details progress, challenges, and key actions taken to improve efficiency and timeliness.

Over the past month, the Division has implemented staffing, process, and technology improvements. Training staff have transitioned to in-field instructor roles, a hiring incentive Letter Of Agreement for Eligibility Technician 2 (ET 2) recruitments has been launched, and IT modernization efforts continue with system upgrades and automation enhancements. Additionally, the Division has expanded agency delay notices to improve applicant communication, with an expedited rollout for APA cases.

While challenges remain, including staffing shortages, system disruptions, and high workloads, the Division remains committed to efficiency, transparency, and compliance. This report provides updates on federal oversight, workload management, IT modernization, staffing, and training initiatives as the Division works toward timely and accurate benefit processing for Alaskans in need.

II. Federal Correspondence and Oversight

In March, the Division received formal correspondence from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), dated March 10, 2025, notifying the State of Alaska that its Recertification Processing Timeliness (RPT) rate for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) had fallen to 36.28%—well below the federally acceptable threshold of 95%. The letter initiated corrective action plan (CAP) escalation procedures and outlined expectations

for a detailed response addressing root causes, corrective steps, timelines, and evaluation methods. FNS emphasized the legal requirement for timely recertification decisions and warned that failure to demonstrate improvement could lead to suspension or disallowance of federal administrative funds. Semi-annual reporting will be required until compliance is achieved. FNS reaffirmed its commitment to support Alaska's efforts to improve SNAP processing timeliness and compliance.

FNS also held meetings with Region 10 directors to provide guidance in preparation for a potential government shutdown and to share updates on Federal staffing changes. While the shutdown was ultimately averted, FNS informed directors that several Region 10 staff, including the statistician and multiple finance personnel, are no longer with the organization. Despite these staffing changes, FNS anticipates continuing operations as normal. Attachment 1 provides a copy of FFY 2024 Alaska RPT CAP letter.

III. Timely Processing of Applications

A. Workload Data

Data Dashboard

The Backlog Dashboard provides a comprehensive overview of pending applications and recertifications across public assistance programs. By categorizing cases into time-based buckets, it helps prioritize work and allocate resources effectively. Key sections include a program summary, detailed breakdowns for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Adult Public Assistance (APA), and critical metrics such as total volume of cases in delayed processing, cases pending action, and the dates of the oldest unprocessed applications. This tool is essential for monitoring performance, identifying bottlenecks, and driving efforts to reduce delays.

System Challenges Impacting Productivity

In the past month, the Division encountered significant system disruptions that affected productivity. A fiber optic cable cut in Juneau and Southeast Alaska disrupted phone and internet services statewide for three days. Because both the Eligibility Information System (EIS) and Master Client Index (MCI) servers are located in Juneau, this outage prevented staff from processing cases in EIS, registering new individuals in ARIES, or running essential reports. During this period, Eligibility Technicians had to rely on manual processes, which further delayed casework, and system unavailability prevented overtime work. For additional details on the impact, see the attached email from the Director.

Further disruptions occurred on February 24, when users experienced login failures in ARIES due to Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) issues. Two days later, a Zscaler update introduced a security issue that blocked access to ILINX until the system's approved access list was updated. Zscaler, a cloud-based security platform, filters and protects internet traffic, ensuring only safe and authorized connections. These cascading technical failures further impacted productivity. To mitigate delays, all supervisors and staff who do not typically process cases temporarily shifted their focus to casework, ensuring applications continued to be reviewed and processed as efficiently as possible.

Progress on Import Review Processing

The Division's targeted effort to address import review processing delays has resulted in significant progress. As previously reported, delays in classifying and registering documents received via email and fax had affected processing timelines. Beginning the week of January 27, the Division launched a focused initiative to resolve this issue, aiming to achieve current processing status by the end of February. As of today, processing dates have advanced to mid-

February for most categories and early March for certain electronic forms, reflecting substantial progress.

Delayed Processing Trends and Next Steps

Between March and April, the number of SNAP and APA applications and recertifications experiencing processing delays increased, with the most notable growth occurring in cases pending between 31 and 90 days. Timeliness in processing SNAP applications declined, as the number of timely approvals dropped and average processing times increased. While APA also saw a rise in cases experiencing processing delays, there was a significant reduction in applications pending for over 360 days, demonstrating progress in resolving older cases.

The overall increase in cases experiencing processing delays is primarily due to the targeted effort to address import review delays. As a result, applications and tasks that were previously stuck in the import review process are now logged and captured in the unacted report, providing long-needed transparency into the total body of work. With a clearer picture of outstanding tasks, the Division can now develop a comprehensive plan to address the full scope of case processing delays and ensure appropriate staff assignments to effectively manage both new and existing workloads.

For further details, please see Attachment 3: Backlog Dashboard with Detail.

B. IT Modernization

Overview of IT Modernization

Since last month, notable progress has been made in automation and system upgrades, driving greater efficiency and reducing manual workloads. The ILINX upgrade continues to advance, with most content exported to support browser flexibility. Automation solutions for after-hours date stamping and image resizing are progressing, with testing scheduled soon.

Acceptance testing is underway for ILINX Cognitive Services, which enhances accuracy and efficiency by automating VCC recording processing. Design planning for CURRENT integration has also moved forward, setting the stage for streamlined data entry. Additionally, new workflow optimizations are being explored to simplify processes, eliminate redundancies, and improve overall operational efficiency.

As outlined in previous reports, DPA remains committed to modernization efforts that align with both funding and operational priorities. The phased approach strategically implements automation tools, starting with Medicaid and APA transitions while maintaining service improvements for SNAP and other programs. These enhancements improve efficiency, accessibility, and service delivery, reinforcing the Division's commitment to meeting court expectations and strengthening program administration.

Attachment 4 provides a comprehensive IT modernization roadmap, detailed descriptions of automation projects, and progress updates on key initiatives.

C. Staffing Improvements

Overview of Staffing Improvements

The Division of Public Assistance (DPA) continues implementing staffing improvements to address recruitment, retention, and operational challenges. While Attachments 5 and 6 have been updated, the most significant change is the implementation of a hiring incentive LOA for Eligibility Technician 2 (ET 2) recruitments.

Efforts to stabilize the workforce are ongoing, including consistent overtime opportunities, flexible scheduling, and Letters of Agreement (LOAs) for staff ineligible for overtime. Recruitment initiatives are actively filling vacancies, supported by enhanced onboarding and multi-week training for eligibility case processing.

Merit State Staff

Overtime opportunities remain available to help manage workloads, with LOAs and flex-time options for ineligible staff. While voluntary overtime is preferred, mandatory overtime may be required during critical periods.

As of last month, the vacancy rate was 30%, reflecting a 2% decrease from the previous month. However, high vacancy levels continue to place significant strain on staff, making recruitment, training, and onboarding top priorities.

A new hiring incentive LOA has been implemented to attract and retain Eligibility Technician 2 (ET 2) candidates. The LOA applies to all new ET 2 recruitments and extends to individuals who joined the Division on or after October 7, 2025, when the agreement was signed. This incentive is designed to draw qualified individuals to the job and encourage them to remain with the Division for at least two years.

All vacant permanent positions are currently in some stage of the recruitment process. Attachment 5 provides details on the distribution and status of Eligibility Technician positions and includes a copy of the signed LOA.

Non-Merit Contract Staff

Contracted staff continue to support administrative functions, including application intake, verification follow-ups, and status updates, in compliance with CMS and FNS guidelines. Contractor staffing levels remain stable with no significant changes.

DPA remains committed to stabilizing its workforce and improving services while ensuring compliance with federal and court-ordered requirements. Attachment 6 outlines the distribution and status of contracted staff.

Training and Staffing Update

Beginning April 1, 2025, the MAGI/SNAP Virtual Instructor-Led Training (VILT) and On-the-Job Training (OJT) team will transition to a new model, shifting from virtual instruction to in-person, field-based training support. These Instructors will be embedded within field offices, working directly with staff and collaborating with field office leadership to provide hands-on guidance and support.

As part of this transition, Instructors will expand their focus beyond new hires, offering training and mentorship to all staff within their assigned offices. They will also serve as a direct communication channel between the Learning and Development team and field staff, ensuring consistent information-sharing and enhanced training opportunities.

With this shift, the Division anticipates moving away from the VILT model entirely, instead utilizing in-office Instructors to provide on-demand training for new hires, based on each office's hiring needs. This approach will offer greater flexibility, allowing offices to train new staff as needed rather than waiting for scheduled VILT sessions.

This transition is part of a broader overhaul of training within the Division. The next phase will introduce a restructured, modular training curriculum fully housed within the state's learning management system (LMS), AspireAlaska. This updated format will allow staff to progress at their own pace, ensuring they have adequate time to absorb and master the material. Additionally, the curriculum will be available on-demand for all staff, enabling refresher training at any time.

The newly formatted MAGI and SNAP training curriculum is expected to launch by mid-summer 2025.

Updated training cohort data is provided in Attachment 7.

IV. Efforts to streamline administration of programs

A. Attachment 2: Workload Management Matrix

On March 11, 2025, through counsel, the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) received an urgent request from counsel for the plaintiffs in *Edwards v. State*, regarding the issuance of agency delay notices for Adult Public Assistance (APA) applications. The request sought to exempt APA applications from the phased rollout and immediately issue delay notices for all APA applications remaining open after 30 days.

Upon receiving the request, Division leadership immediately engaged with the DPA Systems Support team to assess feasibility and timing. It was determined that the system could generate these notices with acceptable interruption of other essential functions and the job was scheduled to run the following day. As a result, approximately 315 notices were distributed on Thursday, March 13, 2025.

This action reflects the Division's commitment to transparency and timely communication with applicants regarding the status of their benefits. The Division remains focused on addressing application processing delays and ensuring that individuals awaiting benefits receive appropriate updates on their cases.

As stated in the March 2025 report, draft notices for agency-caused delays have been created. To ensure a smooth implementation of automated agency delay notices while minimizing operational strain, the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) has phased the rollout over several months. The Division is issuing daily notices for newly overdue cases, specifically on day 8 for Expedited Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications (XFS) and day 31 for regular SNAP applications.

To systematically address cases experiencing delayed processing, the rollout has proceeded in stages, except for APA – change noted above - applications. In February, notices were generated for applications delayed over 90 days. In March, notices were generated for

applications delayed over 60 days. In April, the process will expand further to include applications delayed over 30 days.

By April, all cases—both new and existing—will be managed through the automated notification process. The system will continue running daily to ensure that all day 8 (XFS) and day 31 (SNAP) notices are processed in real time, maintaining timely communication with applicants.

To manage the expected increase in fair hearings following the implementation of agency-caused delay notices, the Division collaborated with the Chief Administrative Law Judge and Alaska Legal Services to establish an efficient process. This group continues to meet to assess the effectiveness of the process and address any issues as they arise.

The Workload Management Matrix has been updated to reflect these changes. Line 23, Notice of Agency-Caused Delay, was updated to reflect the project launch in March 2025. Line 29, Streamlining SNAP Access in Rural Alaska, was also updated to reflect its launch in March 2025.

Other than these updates, there are no significant changes to report for workload management this month. The Division remains on track to implement Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) in July 2025, contingent on continued federal authority and adequate technology and staffing to support the anticipated increase in SNAP applications.

V. Conclusion

The Division of Public Assistance (DPA) continues to make significant progress in addressing application processing delays, strengthening workforce capacity, and advancing IT modernization efforts. The implementation of a hiring incentive LOA, the transition of training

staff to field-based support, and the phased rollout of agency delay notices reflect the Division's commitment to improving service delivery and ensuring compliance with court orders.

Despite ongoing challenges related to staffing shortages, system disruptions, and increasing workload demands, DPA remains focused on sustained improvements in efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. The number of applications and recertifications experiencing delayed processing has been more accurately captured, allowing for a clearer understanding of workload distribution and necessary resource allocation.

With modernization initiatives progressing, including automation enhancements, curriculum restructuring, and workflow optimizations, the Division is building a more sustainable foundation for long-term improvements. These efforts, combined with continued collaboration with federal partners, stakeholders, and the court, reinforce DPA's commitment to delivering timely and accurate benefits to Alaskans in need.

Future reports will continue to provide updates on efforts toward further reduction of cases experiencing processing delays, staffing improvements, training initiatives, and IT modernization, ensuring transparency and accountability in meeting the Division's obligations.

Attachment 1: FFY 2024 Alaska RPT CAP Letter



March 10, 2025

Deb Etheridge, Director

Division of Public Assistance

Alaska Department of Health

350 Main Street, Room 304

Juneau, Alaska 99811-0640

Dear Director Etheridge:

Alaska Division of Public Assistance (AK DPA) is out of compliance with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) requirements set by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (the Act), as amended. The Act requires that households who file an application for recertification by the 15th day of the last month of the expiring certification period and complete all required actions are entitled to a decision by the end of their certification period. If eligible, the State agency must issue benefits to maintain the household's normal date of issuance. While States agencies are required to process all SNAP applications within the timelines provided in the statute, FNS considers a Recertification Processing Timeliness (RPT)

Food and Nutrition Service, Western Regional Office, 90 Seventh St., Suite 10-300, San Francisco, CA 94103

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rate of 95 percent and above acceptable performance. According to the latest FNS data from March 6, 2025, AK's RPT rate is 36.28%.

FNS will use the FNS RPT rate to initiate escalation procedures, as this measure reflects how well the state is meeting statutory requirements for recertification timeliness for households who have completed all required actions. FNS may use data from either the state RPT rate or FNS RPT rate to release the state from escalation.

FNS recognizes the challenges State agencies have faced after the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, however, low RPT rates have a real and significant impact on eligible families who struggle to put food on the table. Timely application processing is imperative to customer service and meeting families' nutrition needs. FNS is committed to working with California to ensure SNAP access is provided in accordance with statutory timeframes. FNS will continue to provide technical assistance as needed to support your ongoing efforts to come into compliance with Federal application processing requirements.

Violation of Federal law can result in suspension or disallowance of administrative funding. It is imperative that APDA improve RPT rates to help the State progress towards 95 percent timeliness for SNAP recertification application processing. **AK DPA must provide FNS a response to this advance notification within 30 days of receipt of this letter.** FNS expects AK DPA's response to the RPT CAP in accordance with 7 CFR 275.17. For example, the CAP must include, but is not limited to:

- Geographic extent of the State agency's unacceptable RPT rate (statewide or only in specific counties/offices);
- Detailed root cause analysis with data metrics to support the identified causal factor(s) contributing to the unacceptable RPT rate;
- Identification of any action(s) already completed to improve the State agency's RPT rate;
- Outline of specific actions to be implemented based on the identified causal factor(s), the expected outcome of each action, the target date for each action, and the date by which each improvement will be achieved;
- A description of the way the State agency will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the corrective action in reaching an acceptable RPT rate, including data metrics to measure the success of each action implemented.

If AK DPA fails to comply with the requirements outlined in this advance notification to the satisfaction of FNS, FNS will take further steps which could result in the suspension or disallowance of Federal funding for State SNAP administrative expenses consistent with [7 CFR 276.4](#).

This is also a reminder that this CAP is subject to semi-annual reporting requirements, per 7 Code of Federal Regulations § 275.17. Semi-annual updates are due every May 1 and November 1 of each fiscal year that a CAP is in effect. Based on the date of this approval, the next update will be due on May 1 to report on status and changes, as applicable. By regulation, the semi-annual updates must include:

- Any additional deficiencies identified since the previous update.

- Documentation that a deficiency was corrected and was removed.
- Any changes to the planned corrective actions for previously reported deficiencies.

We share your desire to improve service to applicants and participants by providing timely and accurate benefits. FNS stands ready to continue to work with you to ensure that ADPA's operation of SNAP is compliant with Federal law and regulations. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Charles Tobin, Regional Director at (415) 645-1927 or at charles.tobin@usda.gov.

Sincerely,

**TERRY
GUNNELL** Digitally signed by
TERRY GUNNELL
Date: 2025.03.10
14:22:15 -07'00'

Terry Gunnell

Acting Regional Administrator

Western Region Office

CC:

Charles Tobin, FNS WRO

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WRO File Code: SNAP\400\CAPS\RPT\AK

Attachment 2: Workload Management Matrix

Dept of Health status update to USDA Food Nutrition Services (FNS) Workload Management Matrix to all states to increase SNAP processing efficiencies.			
	FNS Recommendation	Status	Status
1	FNS Regional Office Assistance with QC Case Completion	Implemented	December 2022 instituted regular meetings.
2	Same Day Service Interviews	Implemented	Emphasizing same-day service interviews aligns with our Business Process Redesign philosophy. Balancing staff capacity as we reopen offices and clear the backlog of applications. Juneau, Bethel, Kodiak, Kenai and Homer ✓ Bethel – implemented August 2023 ✓ Juneau – implemented 11/13/2023. ✓ Kodiak – implemented 11/27/2023. ✓ Kenai – implemented 01/25/2024. ✓ Homer – implemented 01/25/2024. ✓ Wasilla – implemented 03/18/2024. ✓ Fairbanks – implemented 07/8/2024. ✓ Ketchikan – implemented 08/27/2024 ✓ Anchorage – implemented 11/18/2024.
3	Targeted Interviewing and Case Processing	Implemented	Our Business Process Redesign methodology supports assigning 'missions' to staff, aligning cases with their skill levels for more efficient processing.
4	Fully Implementing Allowable Activities for Non-Merit Personnel	Implemented	April 2023 the division contracted out the Virtual Call Center work to Public Consulting Group (PCG). State employees were redirected to processing SNAP applications. One year extension to contract effective 8/1/24. Expanding roles to include Medicaid unwinding activities, data entry for other Medicaid programs that have auto adjudicated eligibility within the ARIES database. FNS denied Alaska's Fee Agent waiver modification request to temporarily amend the area designation at 7 CFR 272.7(a) to allow Fee Agents in Alaska statewide. Discuss with FNS options to include tribes in outreach plan.

5	Extending Certifications to 12 Months	Implemented	Effective June 2023, SNAP certification periods have been extended to 12-months. These households are now subject to the Periodic Report, known in Alaska as the Interim Report, to be completed and returned at the mid-point of their SNAP certification period.
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			Households in which all household members are elderly or disabled and have no earned income may be given a certification period of up to 24 months.
6	Electronic Case Filing or Document Management	Implemented	November 2023 transitioned to a cloud-based electronic management system. (ILinx - document management)
7	Compromise Claims and Termination of Claims	Implemented	<p>Policy already implemented in Alaska. A household may request a compromise to reduce the balance to SNAP claim owed if they cannot repay the overpayment amount within 36 months. No written request or form is required for a household to compromise a SNAP claim.</p> <p>If the household meets the threshold amount of the established debt the Benefit Issuance and Recovery Unit (BIRU) will compromise as follows:</p> <p>Client or Agency Caused Errors, open cases: Compromise the amount exceeding \$360 (\$10 per month times 36 months).</p> <p>Client or Agency Caused Errors, closed cases: Compromise the amount exceeding \$720 (\$20 per month times 36 months).</p>
8	Simplified Self Employment Deduction Standard	Implemented	Policy already implemented in Alaska. The self-employment standard deduction is 50% of the estimated gross self-employment income. If the household believes their self-employment expenses are higher than 50% of their gross self-employment income, they may claim actual expenses as their cost of doing
9	Streamline Data Matches	Implemented	Policy already implemented in Alaska. Alaska already ensures that the state agency is administering matches
			<p><u>Policy already implemented in Alaska. Federal FNS regulations, 7 CFR 273.2(f) lists the factors of eligibility that we are required to verify:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gross nonexempt income, 2. Alien eligibility, 3. Utility expenses, 4. Medical expenses, 5. Social security numbers, 6. Residency, 7. Identity,

10	Streamline Verification Requirements	Implemented	<p>8. Disability,</p> <p>9. All factors of eligibility for households who have been terminated for refusal to cooperate with QC,</p> <p>10. Household composition,</p> <p>11. Students,</p> <p>12. Legal obligation and actual child support payments, and 13. Additional verification for able-bodied adults subject to the time limit. 7 CFR 273.2(f)(3) allows the State agency to mandate verification of any other factor which affects household eligibility or allotment level. Due to Alaska's high SNAP error rate, we require verification of shelter expenses if it makes a difference in the benefit amount.</p>
11	Telephonic and Electronic Signatures	Implemented	<p>Policy already implemented in Alaska. Policy allows telephonically recorded signatures and electronic signatures for the online applications.</p> <p>Electronic signatures available, on pdf applications, MyAlaska and telephonic authorization through VCC and eforms.</p> <p>In process: Improve signature capture via the phone.</p>
12	Telephonic Interviews	Implemented	<p>Policy already implemented in Alaska. This allows interviews via telephone in lieu of a face-to-face interview without the need to document client hardship.</p> <p>FNS approved state plan option.</p>
13	Voluntary Employment and Training Program	Implemented	<p>Policy already implemented in Alaska. The Employment and Training Program in Alaska remains voluntary.</p>
14	Call Centers	Implemented	<p>Policy already implemented in Alaska. DPA operates a Virtual Contact Center (VCC) and outsources non-merit staff duties such as Information and Referral (I&R) and receiving applications.</p> <p>In process: Leverage Genesis contractor to leverage generative AI to answer calls - information and referral questions.</p>

15	Real-Time Data Access Services	Implemented	Policy already implemented in Alaska. Alaska implemented the Instant Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) in early 2021. The IEVS is an information retrieval service that provides information that may indicate questionable eligibility for State benefits. Caseworkers enter basic information about a case and IEVS obtains data regarding each individual from multiple internal and external data sources, runs numerous checks and comparisons, and displays the results on the screen. Data sources check for identity, income, assets, immigration status, Alaska residency, housing
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16	Recertification Interview for Certain Elderly/Disabled Member Households	Implemented	Policy already implemented in Alaska. Alaska is currently approved for a SNAP waiver that allows DPA to forego the requirement to conduct an interview at recertification for households in which all adult members are elderly and/or disabled and have no earned income, provided that the households meet all other recertification requirements. The current waiver approval period is 12/01/2024 through 05/31/2026.
17	Reinstatement of Eligibility	Implemented	Policy already implemented in Alaska. If a SNAP case has been closed mid-certification for failure to provide, and the household submits the required information and/or verification needed to reestablish eligibility within 30 days of the effective date of ineligibility, the caseworker can reopen the case for the remainder of the certification period. A new application or interview is not required.
18	Business Process Reengineering (BPR)	Implemented	<p>Contract with Change Innovation Agency (C!A) to guide DPA Business Process Redesign and the reopening of DPA offices.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. C!A is providing staffing pattern recommendations. 2. C!A is recommendations for training program to expedite staff onboarding while maintaining high-quality case processing standards have been implemented. 3. C!A will evaluate policy unit to identify business process redesign opportunities. <p>Document and process between policy decision and operational implementation.</p>
			SNAP application available on MyAlaska platform and/or Dept of Health website.

19	Online Applications	Implemented	Integrate online Interim Report Form for ongoing SNAP.
21	Online Self-Service Portal	Implemented	<p>Alaska Connect: DPA implemented an online self-service portal. Applicants and clients will be able to upload documents/pictures to support the application/renewal process.</p> <p>Future Engage functionality includes allowing a user to “opt in” for authentication. This will allow access to their documents/forms, review electronic notices, check the status of their application/request, send messages to staff, schedule and/or reschedule an interview, etc.</p> <p>Note: Authentication cannot be required per FNS. However, security controls need to be in place to protect PII and HIPAA data. Launched July 2024</p>
22	Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)	Implemented	<p>Department of Health, Division of Public Assistance, requested and received federal approval to implement an Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) demonstration project. Launched 12/1/25.</p> <p>ESAP is for SNAP households where all adults are aged 60 or older or have a disability as defined by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). With ESAP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Certification period lasts 36 months instead of 24 -No interim report is required during the certification

23	Notice of Agency Caused Delay	Implementing	<p>Final work request submitted to implement automated notifications for agency-caused delays on January 9, 2025. These notices will be generated for SNAP and Adult Public Assistance (APA) applications that remain unprocessed: on day 31 for non-pended applications and day 8 for SNAP expedited cases, or the next business day if these dates fall on a weekend or holiday. To mitigate operational challenges and avoid overwhelming both the Division's Fair Hearings staff and the Administrative Law Group (ALG), the Division of Public Assistance (DPA) will implement a phased approach to issuing the new automated notifications for agency-caused delays. This strategy ensures that overdue cases are addressed systematically while maintaining service continuity and preserving staff capacity to handle appeals and inquiries effectively.</p> <p>Phased Rollout Strategy</p> <p>Instead of generating all overdue notifications simultaneously—which would result in a massive one-time notice issuance—the Division will roll out the notifications in structured batches based on the length of case delays. The proposed schedule is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M o n t h 1: Issue notifications for all applications delayed over 90 days. • M o n t h 2: Issue notifications for all applications delayed over 60 days. • M o n t h 3: Issue notifications for all applications delayed over 30 days. <p>By the fourth month, the system will be fully operational, with all newly overdue cases receiving</p>
24	Reviewing and Streamlining the SNAP Application	Implemented	Coordinated with FNS and partner organizations to streamline the application process and still meet the FNS rules.

25	E-notices	Implementing	Contractor implementing e-notices (text messaging). Launched March 13, 2024. Launch electronic notices. Launch 1st Quarter 2025.
26	Advance Capture (Intelligent Scanning)	Implementing	DPA is amending ImageSource contract to implement ILINX Advance Capture (intelligent scanning). This functionality will categorize documents. Phase 1, for auto recognition and workflow for Application and Renewal forms Q4 2024. Additional forms rolled out in FY2025.
27	Implementing Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)	Implementing	BBCE removes the asset test requirement. BBCE can simplify administrative processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FNS provide Technical Assistance - increments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend/Remove resource limits requirements – no system change. Set the income threshold (Gross Income Limit maximum at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level) in EIS – requires system change. Work request and planning in place to implement within legacy system. The shift off of legacy system to the integrated eligibility enrollment system will include
28	Standard Medical Deductions (SMDs)	Implementing	FNS is approving the Alaska SMD demonstration waiver for a 4-year period, beginning August 1, 2025, and expiring July 31, 2029, under the attached terms and conditions.
29	Streamlining SNAP Access in Rural Alaska	Implementing	To ensure timely delivery of benefits to Alaskans, we are seeking to exercise the option provided in federal rules to simplify the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) process for residents in designated rural areas attempt interviews through cold calls, and if unsuccessful, the application will be certified with the interview deferred. For non-expedited cases, eligibility verifications such as identity, residency, income, and deductions remain mandatory before approval. DPA met with Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) on January 16, 2025 to discuss the regulatory authorities allowed to Alaska at 7 CFR 272.7. Launch - March 2025 Updated 03/18/2025
30	Automated Voice Response/Interactive Voice Response System	Planning to Implement	DPA is evaluating the different technology platforms to enhance the consumer experience. During the interim engaging PCG contractor to support the call center, thereby relieving merited staff from this workload. (Qualtrics, Google, Genesis under consideration)

			Genesis is the VCC platform that connects can connect with Qualtrics as an example.
31	Revise Notices for Clarity	Planning to Implement	Technical assistance is being received to revise notices for clarity, although limitations posed by the mainframe system [old IT system – Eligibility Information System (EIS)] hinder our efficiency in this regard. Once the EIS system is retired and the new Integrated Eligibility Enrollment System online, the notices will be improved. Launch SFY25
32	Transitional SNAP	Planning to Implement	Implementation is being evaluated as BBCE may address the benefit cliff and have a higher income limit. Once the EIS system is retired and the new Integrated Eligibility Enrollment System online implement transitional SNAP program.
33	Bots/Robotic Process Automation	Planning to Implement	DPA is amending ImageSource contract to implement bots and robotic processes, a part of the online SNAP application. Phased implementation to align with other projects.
34	Check-in Kiosks	Planning to Implement	DPA plans implement check-in kiosks at the University Center, in Anchorage. Will evaluate utility in other larger offices.
35	Average Student Work Hours	Considering	To be eligible for SNAP benefits, students must be employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week. We will explore this option to determine if it is a valuable change.
36	Online Identity Verification	Considering	Alaska does not currently have the ability to do this. It requires a third-party vendor to authenticate a SNAP applicant by using a set of multiple-choice questions based on electronically matched public records. Alaska's identity verification policy allows for staff to use multiple available interfaces, any document that reasonably establishes the individual's identity, or collateral contact with someone that can identify the applicant.
37	Stagger Certification Periods	Considering	Alaska has staggered certification periods in the past when we have identified that too many recertifications are due in a particular month, but we have not found the need to do this frequently. This is low yield and does not address the immediate backlog.
37	Targeted Team Focus on SNAP	Not an option in Alaska	While concentrating staff efforts on one program might seem straightforward, in Alaska, this approach burdens clients applying for multiple programs and poses impractical challenges in staff and training duplication amidst the ongoing workforce crisis. This is not apart of the "one and done model," which maximizes workforce by cross training on programs.

			Business Process Resign created a team that focuses on SNAP backlog applications.
39	On-Demand Interviews	Not an option in Alaska	An on demand interview waiver is not an administrative simplification for Alaska. Effective 11/01/2024 Alaska is in full compliance with FNS Interview requirements.
40	Case Banking	Not an option in Alaska	This allows workers to share cases based on specialized functions or workload demands. Alaska does this for the Long-Term Care cases but uses statewide caseload management for everything else.
40	Change Processing Unit	Not an option in Alaska	This recommendation does not align with our Business Process Redesign objectives as it may lead to increased handling of cases, potentially causing delays in DPA workload.
42	Verification Unit	Not an option in Alaska	Hiring specialized staff would increase administrative burdens and risk efficiency, considering Alaska's workforce situation. Alaska did try this in 2003 (EIOP) and it was not successful.

Attachment 3: Backlog Dashboard with Detail

Backlog Summary Tab

Purpose: Provides an aggregated view of backlog applications and recertifications for various programs.

Columns

Program: Lists the programs (Adult Public Assistance, Food Stamps).

Time Buckets (e.g., 000-30 days, 031-45 days): Categories indicating how long applications/recertifications have been unacted or pending.

Total: Total backlog count across all time buckets.

Timeliness Summary Tab

Purpose: Provides the average timeliness of approved applications and recertifications for the six months prior to the report month.

Timely Actions (timeframe)

Lists the timeliness for each program (Adult Public Assistance, SNAP) by category (Application, Recertification and SNAP Expedite Applications).

Application Decision Cycle time (timeframe): Average number of days it takes to process to completion (approvals and denials) an application for each program (Adult Public Assistance, SNAP). Average number of days it takes to process to completion (approvals and denials) an application for each program (Adult Public Assistance, SNAP).

SNAP Backlog Detail Tab

Purpose: Details the backlog specifically for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), including expedited and non-expedited cases.

Columns

Program Categories: Breaks out SNAP expedited, non-expedited applications, and recertifications.

Time Buckets (e.g., 000-30 days, 031-45 days): Categories indicating how long applications/recertifications have been unacted or pending.

Number Pending: The number that are being processed, in a pending status and not yet completed.

Number Unacted: Cases yet to be acted upon.

Oldest: Date of the oldest application/recertification case.

APA Backlog Detail Tab

Purpose: Provides the backlog for Adult Public Assistance (APA) applications and recertifications.

Columns

Program Categories: Breaks out APA applications and recertifications.

Time Buckets(e.g., 000-30 days, 031-45 days): Categories indicating how long applications/recertifications have been unacted or pending.

Number Pending: The number that are being processed, in a pending status and not yet completed.

Number Unacted: Cases yet to be acted upon.

Oldest: Date of the oldest application/recertification case.

SNAP Timeliness Detail Tab

Purpose: Details the application approval timeliness specifically for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Rows:

Month: Identifies the calendar month related to the data in the row

Prev six: Aggregate data for the six months prior to the report month

Columns:

Total Approvals: The number of cases approved in the month for the related category (Application, Recertification, Expedite Application, All approvals)

Timely Approvals: The number of cases from the total approvals that were approved within required timeframes for the related category (Application, Recertification, Expedite Application, All approvals)

Performance: The percentage of the total number of cases approved timely by category (Application, Recertification, Expedite Application, All approvals)

APA Timeliness Detail Tab

Currently under development: At this time we are experiencing an issue with one of our timeliness data reports not capturing all data points required to generate this metric for the APA program. The division has been able to identify the root cause of the APA data issue. This will take significant programming resources. Once scope of work is outlined a timeline for provision will be included.

Purpose: Details the application approval timeliness specifically for the Adult Public Assistance Program (APA)

Rows:

Month: Identifies the calendar month related to the data in the row

Prev six: Aggregate data for the six months prior to the report month

Columns:

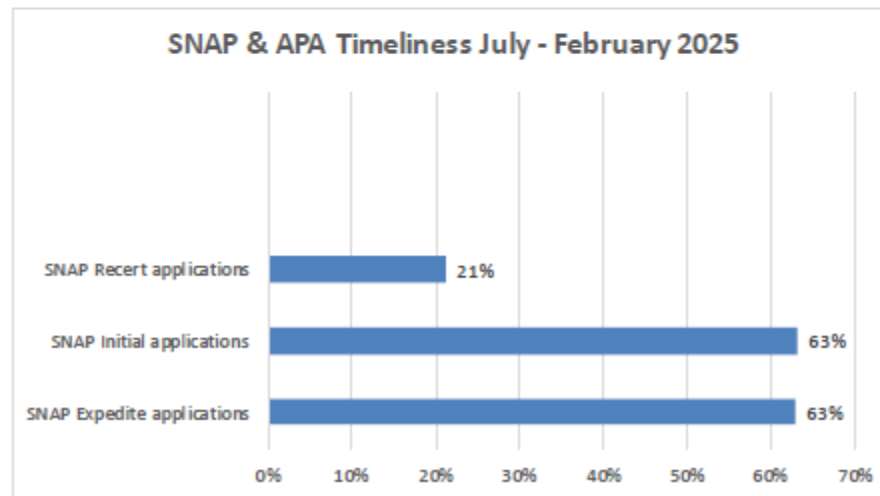
Total Approvals: The number of cases approved in the month for the related category (Application, Recertification, All approvals)

Timely Approvals: The number of cases from the total approvals that were approved within required timeframes for the related category (Application, Recertification, All approvals)

Performance: The percentage of the total number of cases approved timely by category (Application, Recertification, All approvals)

State of Alaska Dept. of Health – Division of Public Assistance
SNAP and APA Timeliness - Report Date April 2025

Timely Actions July 2024 - February 2025	
Program	Percent Timely
SNAP Applications and Recerts	14,601
SNAP Expedite applications	63%
SNAP Initial applications	63%
SNAP Recert applications	21%
Placeholder for APA Data	
Application Decision Cycle Time July 2024 - February 2025	
Program	Average Days
SNAP	36
Placeholder for APA Data	



Backlog Applications/Recertifications - Updated 03/13/2025

Program	000 to 30 days	031-45 days	046-60 days	061-90 days	091-120 days	121-150 days	151-180 days	181-210 days	211-240 days	241-270 days	271-300 days	301-330 days	331-360 days	over 360 days	Total
APA Total (Applications and Recerts)	-	151	79	114	46	8	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	408
APA Applications	-	149	77	114	46	8	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	404
APA Recertifications	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
SNAP Total (Applications and Recerts)	496	777	168	251	1,250	1,030	439	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	4,414
SNAP (Expedite > 7 days)	496	38	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	571
SNAP (non-Expedite Applications)	-	480	110	162	572	507	138	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1,970
SNAP (Recertifications)	-	259	21	89	678	523	301	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1,873
Total	496	928	247	365	1,296	1,038	442	2	4	2	0	1	0	1	4,822

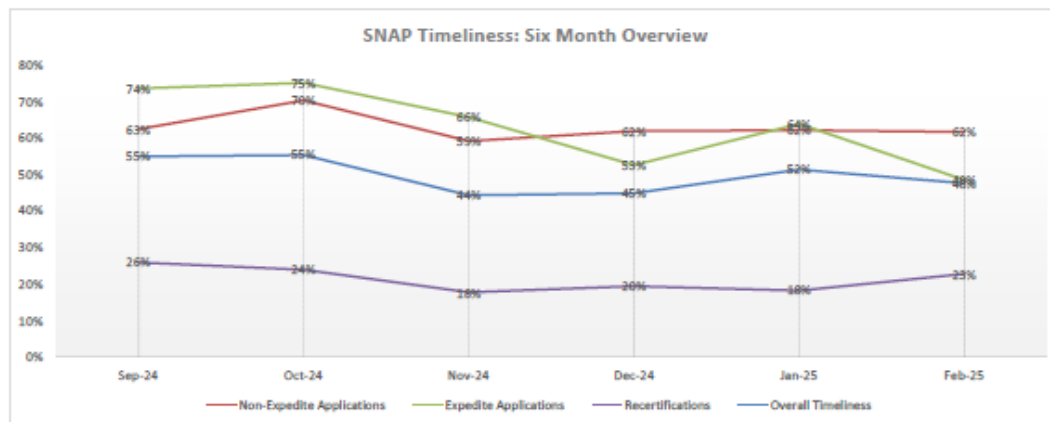
SNAP Backlog Detail - 03/13/2025

Program	000 to 30 days	031-45 days	046-60 days	061-90 days	091-120 days	121-150 days	151-180 days	181-210 days	211-240 days	241-270 days	271-300 days	301-330 days	331-360 days	over 360 days	Total	Number Pended	Number unacted	Oldest
SNAP Total (Applications and Recerts)	496	777	168	251	1,250	1,030	439	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	4,414	526	3888	2024-02-21
SNAP (Expedite > 7 days)	496	38	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	571	350	221	2025-01-14
SNAP (non-Expedite Applications)	-	480	110	162	572	507	138	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1,970	88	1882	2024-05-01
SNAP (Recertifications)	-	259	21	89	678	523	301	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1,873	88	1785	2024-02-21

APA Backlog Detail

Program	000 to 30 days	031-45 days	046-60 days	061-90 days	091-120 days	121-150 days	151-180 days	181-210 days	211-240 days	241-270 days	271-300 days	301-330 days	331-360 days	over 360 days	Total	Number Pended	Number unacted	Oldest
APA Total (Applications and Recerts)	-	151	79	114	46	8	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	408	70	338	2024-07-11
APA Applications	-	148	77	114	46	8	3	2	4	1	-	-	-	-	404	70	334	2024-07-11
APA Recertifications	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	0	4	2025-01-22

Alaska Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Timeliness													
Month	Non-Expedite Applications			Expedite Applications			Recertifications			Total Initial Application and Recertification Timeliness			
	Total Approvals	Timely Approvals	Performance	Total Approvals	Timely Approvals	Performance	Total Approvals	Timely Approvals	Performance	Total Number of Approvals	Total Timely Approvals	Avg. Processing	Performance
Jul-24	1,057	828	78%	1,270	1,196	94%	1,089	796	73%	3,416	2,820	17	83%
Aug-24	934	628	67%	973	792	81%	759	320	42%	2,666	1,740	20	65%
Sep-24	1,050	657	63%	747	551	74%	749	195	26%	2,546	1,403	27	55%
Oct-24	978	689	70%	522	393	75%	794	191	24%	2,294	1,273	33	55%
Nov-24	847	502	59%	695	458	66%	1,033	184	18%	2,575	1,144	41	44%
Dec-24	846	525	62%	719	379	53%	783	153	20%	2,348	1,057	39	45%
Jan-25	1,077	671	62%	937	600	64%	703	129	18%	2,717	1,400	35	52%
Feb-25	873	540	62%	728	354	49%	520	119	23%	2,121	1,013	40	48%
Prev. six month	5,671	3,584	63%	4,348	2,735	63%	4,582	971	21%	14,601	7,290	36	50%



Last updated 03/05/25

Alaska Adult Public Assistance Timeliness Placeholder
In process of developing data collection programming for this metric

At this time we are experiencing an issue with one of our timeliness data reports not capturing all data points required to generate this metric for the APA program. The division has deployed IT resources to troubleshoot the issue however, we have been unable to identify the root cause as of this submission date.

From: [HSS DPA Director's Office \(DOH sponsored\)](#)
To: [HSS DPA Director's Office \(DOH sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Note from Deb: Update on System Outages and Workload Management
Date: Friday, February 28, 2025 12:43:49 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



February 28, 2025

Dear Team,

I want to acknowledge the challenges we are facing due to the ongoing system outages and thank you for your patience and dedication. A widespread internet and phone outage in Juneau has impacted our operations statewide because the servers for the Master Client Index (MCI) and the Eligibility Information System (EIS) are located there. As a result, we are unable to process cases in EIS, add new individuals to ARIES, run IEVS reports, or complete registrations.

This outage is also affecting Juneau-based staff in Administration, Policy, Program Integrity, Research and Analysis, and Family Nutrition. If you are trying to reach staff in these units, please be patient, as they may not have access to email or phone communications.

To manage our public assistance eligibility workload, we are conducting scheduled and missed interviews through the Virtual Contact Center (VCC) and documenting in Word, but cases will remain in pause until the systems are restored. Overtime has been canceled this weekend, and on Monday, we will need an all-hands-on-deck approach to process the backlog. Staff typically assigned to Ex-Parte reviews and fair hearings will be asked to assist, and with Monday being the first business day of the month, we anticipate high demand. We may need to adjust VCC coverage and lobby assignments to ensure staff can work through cases efficiently. Expedited Food Stamp (XFS)

timeframes will be impacted, and while we recognize this is not ideal, there is no alternative until our systems are operational.

I understand the timing of this outage is far from ideal, and I appreciate your flexibility and teamwork as we navigate these challenges. Please continue to communicate any concerns through your supervisors, and I will provide updates as soon as we have more information.

Thank you for your hard work and commitment to serving Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Deb Etheridge | Director

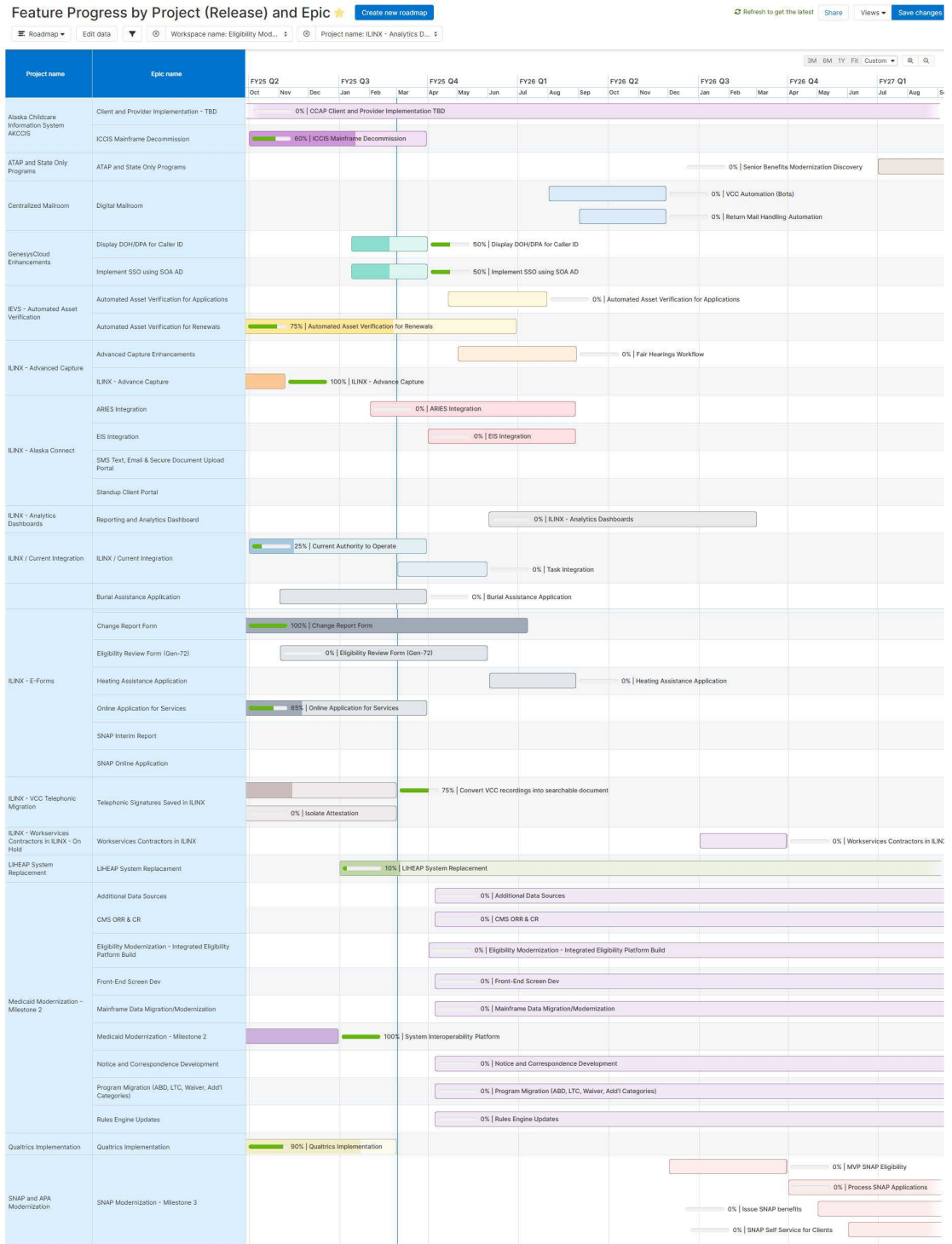
Division of Public Assistance, Alaska Department of Health

P.O. Box 110640 | Juneau, AK 99811-0640

907.465.2680 (office)

Deb.etheridge@alaska.gov

Attachment 4: Division of Public Assistance IT Modernization Roadmap



Project name	Project Description
Alaska Childcare Information System AKCCIS	<p>DPA recently implemented a cloud based Child Care Information System - Alaska Childcare Information System (AKCCIS) to service the unique administrative and service needs for Alaskan children.</p> <p>Additional functionality provides on-line application for services/benefits for clients and providers, reducing administrative overhead and related cost for the State, and providing a convenient, fast, self-service option for our clients.</p>
ATAP and State Only Programs	<p>This modernization project is to develop and deploy a modern, cost efficient Integrated Eligibility System (IES) or module to replace our costly, high maintenance legacy mainframe platform. This development phase includes the following programs: Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP) and General Relief Assistance (GRA).</p>
Centralized Mailroom	<p>The Centralized Mailroom project provides two benefits to both staff and clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A centralized location for both incoming and outgoing mail, reducing the administrative burden and associated cost for field offices, and • Automation for opening, storing, and digital routing of mail/returned mail (routed to the appropriate field office/staff to resolve the communication issue).
GenesysCloud Enhancements	<p>DPA is currently using the Genesys Cloud system for our Virtual Call Center. This client experience enhancement facilitates 'Caller ID' display to our clients for incoming calls from our Virtual Call Center providing improved client response to benefit related calls and reducing the time, administrative overhead, and cost of manual calls from our staff (often multiple attempts).</p> <p>Additionally, DPA is implementing single sign-on capabilities to our Genesys Cloud application, providing our staff with a seamless experience across the many applications needed to service our clients.</p>
IEVS - Automated Asset Verification	<p>This staff efficiency project is to automate requests for reports from the Eligibility/Asset Verification system eliminating the need for Eligibility staff to manually request reports, saving time and associated cost to the State.</p>
ILINX - Advanced Capture	<p>This staff efficiency project uses ILINX - Advanced Capture feature to automatically review electronic documents received from clients to find specific document 'types' (Applications, Review), then moves the documents to the appropriate work queue for our staff to process. This reduces staff time (sorting/organizing documents received that require action) and related cost to the State and improving overall turn-around time for the client.</p>
ILINX - Alaska Connect	<p>Alaska Connect is a self-service client portal. The portal provides our clients access to: initial Application for service/benefits, review status, demographic updates, calendar of events, etc.</p> <p>The Alaska Connect portal provides a fast, easy, and convenient option for clients to access and/or update their information. Additionally, Alaska Connect reduces administrative overhead and related cost to the State.</p>
ILINX - Analytics Dashboards	<p>This ILINX feature facilitates visibility to vital statistics such as application volume by program on a weekly basis via Reports and Dashboards; provides necessary information for staff management and response, such as shifting resources where they are needed based upon volume.</p>
ILINX / Current Integration	<p>This staff efficiency project will integrate our workflow management tool (Current) with our document management system (ILINX) to facilitate automated 'task' generation for staff. Necessary administrative and care coordination 'tasks' are generated for the staff based upon the receipt of various document/image types in the document management system improving staff efficiency, and overall client experience.</p>

ILINX - E-Forms	<p>The purpose of this project is to configure an ILINX eform and workflow to automate the process, making it easier for in need Alaskans to apply as well as reducing the burden of manual tasks by DPA staff.</p> <p>Current e-forms to be worked on: Application for Services, Heating Assistance Application, Burial Assistance Application, and Eligibility Review Form</p>
ILINX - VCC Telephonic Migration	<p>This staff efficiency project is to integrate the Virtual Call Center system (Genesys Cloud) with the Electronic Document Management System (ILINX) to facilitate capturing, condensing and storing 'voice signatures' in our document management system. This reduces the administrative burden (time) on staff and reduces the related cost to the State.</p>
ILINX - Workservices Contractors in ILINX - On Hold	ILINX - Workservices Contractors in ILINX - On Hold
LIHEAP System Replacement	<p>Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is currently on the ECOS system which is maintained by a contractor - JAI. This contractor's contract is due to expire July 2025; DPA plans to go out for competitive bid for a new contract. DPA is looking to replace the ECOS system to improve efficiencies, reduce cost and improve our client experience. DPA is in the process of developing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to assess our options.</p>
Medicaid Modernization - Milestone 2	<p>This modernization project is to develop and deploy a modern, cost efficient Integrated Eligibility System (IES) to replace our costly, high maintenance legacy mainframe platform. This development phase includes the following programs: Aged Blind and Disabled, Long Term Care, Waiver Medicaid, TEFRA, Additional Medicaid categories (Title IV-E, Residential Psychiatric Treatment, and MAGI-Spousal Support), and Hospital Presumptive Eligibility.</p>
Parking lot	<p>As the name implies, this is a holding spot for projects which have not yet been approved to move forward.</p>
Qualtrics Implementation	<p>Qualtrics is a survey tool that facilitates collecting feedback from our staff and clients, then returns the related analytics on the survey results. This data provides insight to steer our modernization development efforts toward meaningful improvements to both our staff and our clients.</p>
SNAP and APA Modernization	<p>This modernization project is to develop and deploy a modern, cost efficient Integrated Eligibility System (IES) to replace our costly, high maintenance legacy mainframe platform. This development phase includes the following programs: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Adult Public Assistance (APA).</p>



State of AK, Dept. of Health Division of Public Assistance

ILINX Automation Projects: Status Report

Report #3:
March 13, 2025

Projects Completed to Date

PROJECT NAME	DATE COMPLETED	CONFIGURED FUNCTIONALITY	VALUE DELIVERED: HOW IT HELPED
Automated Document Type Classification	11/18/2024	ILINX automatically reviews the electronic documents received via email by the public, looking for Applications and Reviews. If it finds an <i>Application</i> or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced the review and classification of <i>Applications and Reviews</i>, by hundreds of hours, a week.

PROJECT NAME	DATE COMPLETED	CONFIGURED FUNCTIONALITY	VALUE DELIVERED: HOW IT HELPED
		<i>Review</i> , it moves the <i>Application or Review</i> to the Priority work queue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff work <i>Applications and Reviews</i> first, striving to align to the SLA.
Childcare Assistance Program (CCAP): Provider and Family Eligibility	9/27/2024	Two ILINX applications were configured. ILINX is integrated with DPA's new business system, AKCCIS. ILINX was configured to ingest and store process documentation. Staff can view the electronic documents by clicking an icon in AKCCIS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productivity gain - access to electronic documents, statewide, from any office Productivity gains - staff work in one system, AKCCIS Reduction of printing costs Reduction of filing supplies costs Reduced risk associated with the loss of paper records due to fire, earthquake, water damage, etc.
Childcare Program Office: Licensing	9/27/2024	ILINX is integrated with DPA's new business system, AKCCIS. ILINX was configured to ingest and store process documentation. Staff can view the electronic documents by clicking an icon in the AKCCIS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above
Childcare Program Office: Accounting	9/27/2024	ILINX is integrated with DPA's new business system, AKCCIS. ILINX was configured to ingest and store process documentation. Staff can review the electronic documents by clicking an icon in the AKCCIS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See above
ILINX eForms: Color code by form type	7/31/2024	Numerous ILINX <i>smart forms</i> were configured so that clients and applicants could fill them out electronically from their phones, tablets, computers,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productivity gain- staff can easily identify the different eForms, allowing them to work per the proper process requirements.

PROJECT NAME	DATE COMPLETED	CONFIGURED FUNCTIONALITY	VALUE DELIVERED: HOW IT HELPED
		etc. Besides the Title, staff would need to read through the eForm if they had been pulled off for a phone call, etc.	
ILINX Engage: Phase 1 Client Portal- <i>Alaska Connect</i>	7/24/2024	ILINX was configured for DPA's Alaska Connect Portal. All ILINX eForms, links to PDF forms and important information, are available through the experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to work with – applicant/client self-service and integrated with MyAlaska. • Access to applications and documentation from any device, any time and any location.
ILINX eForm: Report of Change	7/11/2024	An ILINX <i>smart form</i> was configured to ensure ease of use and the collection of good data. The form fields are scripted to align with the desired data type such as a 9-digit numeric, a calendar “pop up”, a list of choices in a pull-down list and yes/no radio buttons to create a stellar experience. Based on the client's answer to a question, only the necessary additional questions will be asked.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to work with, client self-service • Smartform fills in fields, enforces the collection of data to ensure completeness (minimize process delays). • Eliminated ‘black hole’: client receives text or email (if they Opt in) • Access to Report of Change from any device, any time and any location.
ILINX eForm: SNAP Interim Report	5/6/2024	An ILINX <i>smart form</i> was configured to ensure ease of use and the collection of good data. The form fields are scripted to align with the desired data type such as a 9-digit numeric, a calendar “pop up”, a list of choices in a pull-down list and yes/no radio buttons to create a stellar experience. Based on the client's answer to a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to work with, client self-service • Smartform fills in fields, enforces the collection of data to ensure completeness (minimize process delays). • Eliminated ‘black hole’: client receives text or email (if they Opt in) • Access to SNAP Interim Report from any device, any time and any location.

PROJECT NAME	DATE COMPLETED	CONFIGURED FUNCTIONALITY	VALUE DELIVERED: HOW IT HELPED
		question, only the necessary additional questions will be asked.	
ILINX Secure Document Upload	03/13/2024	A link on DPA's website was added to support an applicant/client's ability to securely upload documents required to support benefits determination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to work with, client self-service. Clients/applicants can use the camera on their phone to upload pictures of their documents. • Eliminated staff manual paper tasks -opening mail, scanning documents, and document classification.
Automated SMS/Email Notification	03/12/2024	Automated SMS/Text and email confirmation notices transmitted when client opts-in during all eForm submissions (SNAP Application, Interim Report, Change Report, Secure Document Upload)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Blackhole" - clients and applicants would call or submit duplicate paperwork as no confirmation was provided. • Reduction of phone inquiries and duplicate submissions as clients who Opt In receive a confirmation email or text message.
USDS Consultation	03/01/2024	FNS sent USDS to AK to provide support – process and technology. ImageSource met to provide information and access (integrate) to the ILINX system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize key data entry into multiple systems. DPA associate keys once, data is pushed to the eligibility system, supporting faster determinations.
Weekly Data Report: ILINX Utilization	01.01.2024 – on going	Weekly data by volume for each configured customer for work processed through DPA ILINX solution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides DPA the ability to see where work is coming in, the volume of work by media and where process bottlenecks.
ILINX eForm: SNAP Application	12/28/2023	An ILINX <i>smart form</i> was configured to ensure ease of use and the collection of good data. The form fields are scripted to align	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to work with, client self-service • Smartform fills in fields, enforces the collection of

PROJECT NAME	DATE COMPLETED	CONFIGURED FUNCTIONALITY	VALUE DELIVERED: HOW IT HELPED
		with the desired data type such as a 9-digit numeric, a calendar “pop up”, a list of choices in a pull-down list and yes/no radio buttons to create a stellar experience. Based on the client’s answer to a question, only the necessary additional questions will be asked.	<p>data to ensure completeness (minimize process delays).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminated ‘black hole’: client receives text or email (if they Opt in) • Access to SNAP Application from any device, any time and any location.

Projects Inflight

PROJECT NAME	PERCENT COMPLETE	PROJECT STATUS
ILINX eForm: All Programs Application	75%	<p>No changes since previous Report, waiting for approval to move forward.</p> <p>All Program application eForm configuration is complete, tested and accepted by DPA. The electronic application (eForm) has been submitted to FNS and CMS for approval.</p>
ILINX Upgrade, ability to leverage browser agnostic ILINX interface (Flex).	35%	80% of DPA’s ILINX content has been exported to support the ILINX upgrade. ImageSource continues to configure system so DPA can use any browser with ILINX.
Date Received for after hours, weekends, and holidays	10%	<p>ImageSource identifying solution options.</p> <p>Error caused in auto date stamp when clerical mistakenly enters incorrect received date. Solutioning ways to automate the received date to recognize when an item is received after hours, weekends and holidays to push to next business per Policy.</p>
Automatic resizing of emailed images	80%	<p>Solution logic updated into Test environment on 3.13. Initial validation 3.14 to support DPA acceptance testing to begin week of 3.17.</p>

		The public email attachments, rather than using the Secure Document portal. The attachments are often too large and error when trying to open them. Clerical is having to resize every attachment that is in an email, so they don't have to take time in trying to figure out which ones are too large. This process is reducing productivity and can be solutioned through automation. Finalize configuration for DPA testing/acceptance of solution.
ILINX Cognitive Services: Automated processing of VCC Recordings	80%	DPA is currently executing acceptance testing of the VCC solution. DPA is in testing the solution. ILINX is automatically converting the VCC recordings into a searchable document as well as clipping the entire recording (interview) to just the required portion, the attestation.
ILINX Analytics	0%	No changes since February Report. Reports and dashboards will be configured that illustrate statistics such as how many SNAP applications were processed this week. Preliminary requirements defined, to be configured when the software upgrade is complete.
CURRENT Integration	0%	Design planning meeting held on 3.13 focusing on Activity and associated program designations. ILINX will be configured to push the data typed in by the DPA associate directly into CURRENT. The integration of ILINX and CURRENT greatly reduces the amount of data entry for DPA associates. ImageSource to re-engage with DPA and CIA in the next few weeks.

Projects Queued Up: Working through Procurement

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT PURPOSE
Digital Mailroom	No change since Last Report. The purpose of this project is to automate the opening and routing of returned mail. The current process is decentralized, with undeliverable mail returned to a field office and then being manually worked by DPA associates.

ILINX eForm: Heating Asst Application	No change since Last Report. The purpose of this project is to configure an ILINX eform and workflow to automate the process, making it easier for in need Alaskans to apply as well as reducing the burden of manual tasks by DPA staff. The Heating Assistance form will be available via the SOA public website, My Alaska website as well as the Alaska Connect portal.
ILINX eForm: Burial Assistance Request	No change since Last Report. The purpose of this project is to configure an ILINX eform and workflow to automate the process, making it easier for in need Alaskans to apply as well as reducing the burden of manual tasks by DPA staff. The Burial Assistance smart form will be available via the SOA public website, My Alaska website as well as the Alaska Connect portal.
ILINX eForm: Eligibility Recertification Process	No change since Last Report. The purpose of this project is to configure an ILINX Eligibility Review smart eForm, providing an electronic means for Alaskans to confirm their eligibility, i.e., to continue receiving current benefits. The new ILINX eform will leverage as many components, as possible, utilized in the ILINX SNAP Application, SNAP Interim Report and Report of Change eForms.
ILINX eForm: Long Term Care assistance	No change since Last Report. The purpose of this project is to identify LTC workflow packages and configure ILINX Case Files workflow so SOA staff can view Long Term Care content discretely. Configure ILINX to leverage a unique 'Intake Location' value to support the process. DPA would like a means to identify these cases and their documents. DPA would like a unique ILINX Document Upload to extend an integrated method for SOA LTC Providers to submit documents.



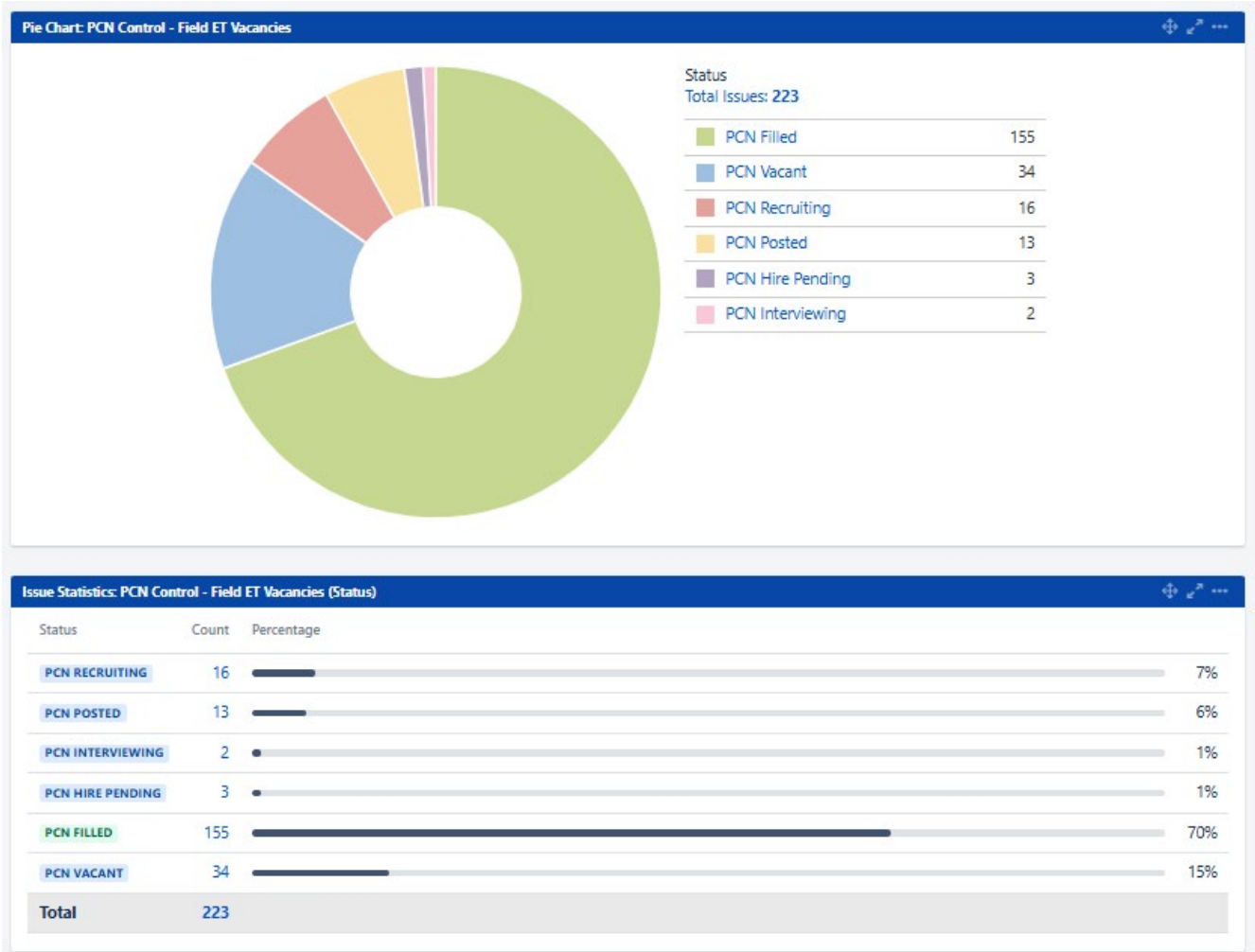
Projects – ILINX Evolutions in Discussion

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT PURPOSE
Simplify current method for the way SNAP Interim Reports are processed	Eliminate one ILINX workflow queue when there are no changes identified on Interim Report; estimated labor saving and the potential disruption of client benefits.
Simplify current method for the way ET1s interacts with ILINX (classifying documents)	Consolidate three ILINX workflow queues into one: estimated labor saving of 30-45 seconds per package.

ILINX Case Files Workflow Modernization	Eliminate ILINX <i>Work/ET2</i> workflow queue: estimated labor saving of 30-45 seconds per package.

Attachment 5: Status of Eligibility Technician Positions

Distribution of Full-Time Permanent and Long-Term Non-Permanent Eligibility Technician Positions (Eligibility Technician 1 - Eligibility Office Manager 2 job class). Percentage Status of Full-Time Permanent and Long-Term Non-Permanent Eligibility Technician Positions



Data provided by Division of Public Assistance Administration, verified with Alaska Budgeting System and JIRA, 03/06/2025

***Definitions:**

Field Eligibility Technician (ET): Eligibility Technician 1 serves as an entry level technician performing eligibility determinations and authorizing public and family assistance benefits for limited-assistance programs.

Eligibility Technician 2 (ET 2) Eligibility Technician 2 is the journey level of the technical series. Incumbents perform the full scope of independent technical work necessary to conduct accurate and timely eligibility determinations and benefit authorizations for

applicants and ongoing clients receiving benefits from often diverse public and family assistance programs.

Eligibility Technician 3 (ET3) *Eligibility Technician 3 serves as a lead or advanced technician who trains lower level technicians, assigns and evaluates work, and/or performs specialized services and the most difficult or controversial case management to determine eligibility and authorize benefits for public and family assistance programs.*

Eligibility Technician 4 (ET4) *Eligibility Technician 4 is the supervisory level of the technical series. Incumbents are responsible for the effective operations of one or more technical units that provide eligibility determinations and ongoing benefit authorizations for applicants and clients receiving benefits from public and family assistance programs.*

Eligibility Office Manager 1 (EOM1) *Eligibility Office Manager I is the first level of the professional series in which incumbents direct staff and manage the programmatic delivery and operational logistics of one or more discrete offices that provide the delivery of public and family assistance programs to eligible applicants and ongoing clients.*

Eligibility Office Manager 2 (EOM2) *Eligibility Office Manager 2 is the second level of the professional series in which incumbents direct one or more discrete offices where the scale or logistics of operations are large enough to require the direction of staff and operations through one or more technical eligibility supervisors due to the size and demographics of client populations and/or geographic separation of multiple office sites.*

Permanent (Budgeted) Positions: *These are ongoing roles included in the Division's annual budget, providing stable employment with full benefits.*

Long-Term Non-Permanent (LTNP) Positions: *These are temporary roles created for specific or extended-duration needs, offering the same benefits as permanent positions.*

PCN Recruiting: *The position is actively being prepared for recruitment, including drafting or finalizing job descriptions, determining qualifications, and initiating the approval process to post the position.*

PCN Posted: *The position has been advertised, and applications are being accepted through the designated recruitment platform.*

PCN Interviewing: *Candidates have been screened, and interviews are being conducted to evaluate qualifications and suitability for the position.*

PCN Hire Pending: *A candidate has been selected, and the hiring process is underway, including approval to hire request pending, offer letters, or other onboarding procedures.*

PCN Filled: *The position has been successfully filled, and the new hire has started or is scheduled to begin work.*

PCN Vacant: *The position is currently unfilled and not actively progressing through any stage of recruitment or hiring.*

Job Description

Join the Department of Health!
We're thrilled to welcome you!
We've made our application process more accessible than ever.
Please take a look at our job announcement below.
If you can see yourself in this role, apply now—your next opportunity awaits!

This position is open to Alaskan Residents only.
Please check out the [residency definition](#) to determine if you qualify.



Are you someone who enjoys taking on challenges with rewards?
If so, we invite you to join one of our dynamic teams at the Division of Public Assistance.
Working with us offers a unique, ever-changing experience that is both challenging and rewarding. Our aim is to develop a more modern and adaptable system that can better serve Alaskans.

The Division of Public Assistance is currently offering a hire incentive bonus of up to \$2,500.00 to newly hired permanent Eligibility Technician 2s.

We invite you to watch our "Welcome to DPA" video here:
<https://vimeo.com/1023052645?share=copy>

From: [HSS DPA Director's Office \(HSS sponsored\)](#)
To: [HSS DPA Director's Office \(HSS sponsored\)](#)
Subject: Note from Deb: Hiring Bonus for Eligibility Technician 2 Positions
Date: Friday, February 21, 2025 1:26:39 PM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)



February 21, 2025

Dear Team,

To help strengthen our workforce and address ongoing staffing challenges, a hiring incentive has been approved by the administration and the union, for Eligibility Technician 2 (ET 2) hires. This incentive applies to ET 2 employees hired on or after October 7, 2024, and is designed to attract and retain new team members in these critical roles.

The incentive includes:

- A \$1,250 lump sum payment at the midpoint of the probation period.
- An additional \$1,250 upon successful completion of probation.
- A required two-year commitment to DPA, with a prorated repayment schedule if an employee leaves before the full term.

This hiring incentive applies only to new ET 2s hired into permanent positions as of October 7, 2024. Those affected by this will be contacted soon by the administration team. State of Alaska employees in ET 2 positions hired prior to October 7, 2024, or hired as Long-Term Non-Permanent ET 2s, are not eligible under the agreement. Former employees may be eligible if they have been out of State service for more than a year and are rehired as an ET 2.

Please know that our focus remains on strengthening the team to improve overall workload balance and support for all staff. We hope that this incentive

will be part of the solution to helping us achieve these goals. We know the work performed by our tenured staff remains invaluable, and we will continue to explore ways to support and retain our experienced employees.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to reach out to Becca Stovall, Division Operations Manager, and Tom Bybee, Chief of Field Operations. Thank you for your continued dedication to public service and the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Deb Etheridge | Director
Division of Public Assistance, Alaska Department of Health
P.O. Box 110640 | Juneau, AK 99811-0640
907.465.2680 (office)
Deb.etheridge@alaska.gov

LETTER OF AGREEMENT
between the
STATE OF ALASKA
and the
ALASKA STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
representing the
GENERAL GOVERNMENT UNIT

Division of Public Assistance; Hire Incentive

24GG144

It is agreed between the parties that the following terms and conditions of employment apply to all employees appointed to positions in the below listed job class at the Division of Public Assistance of the Department of Health. No provision of the July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, master agreement not specifically referenced is modified by this Agreement.

1. Eligible employees are those appointed to the Eligibility Technician 2 job class in a permanent position.
2. The LOA is limited to the probation period following initial appointments to the above referenced job class.
3. Employees in the Eligibility Technician 2 job class will receive a lump sum payment of one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$1,250), minus mandatory deductions, at the midway point of the probation period.
4. Employees in the Eligibility Technician 2 job class will receive a lump sum payment of one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$1,250), minus mandatory deductions, upon successful completion of the probationary period.
5. In order to receive the lump sum payment, the Division of Public Health must notify Division of Finance, Payroll Processing of the employee's eligibility. Until such notification is received, the employee will not be eligible. The penalty pay provisions of Article 21.07 do not apply to this lump sum payment.
6. To be eligible for an incentive, employees shall agree to a two (2) year term of employment with the Department at the time of hire. If the employee leaves the Division of Public Assistance (i.e. is, for any reason, no longer employed in any capacity by DPA), any incentive paid at that time will be owed back to the Department on a pro-rated basis according to the following schedule:
 - a. Less than six months – 100%
 - b. Six, but less than twelve months – 75%
 - c. Twelve, but less than eighteen months – 50%
 - d. Eighteen, but less than twenty-four months – 25%
 - e. More than twenty-four months – 00%

The State may begin recovery of the debt in the same manner as an overpayment, according to AAM 330.

7. Current State of Alaska employees working in ET 2 positions are not eligible for this incentive. Former employees are eligible if they have been away from State service for more than one (1) year.
8. The provisions of this agreement will not apply to incumbents of nonpermanent positions as defined in Article 9 of the bargaining unit agreement.

This agreement is effective upon signing and remains in effect through June 30, 2025, except that it may be canceled by either party with fifteen (15) days written notice. This agreement is entered into solely to address the specific circumstances of this particular situation. It does not establish any practice or precedent between the parties. This agreement shall not be referred to in any other dispute, grievance, arbitration, hearing, or any other forum, except as may be necessary for the execution of its terms.

FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA:

Kate Sheehan

Kate Sheehan, Director
Division of Personnel & Labor Relations
Department of Administration

10/07/24

Date

FOR ASEA:

Heidi Drygas

Heidi Drygas, Executive Director

10/7/24

Date

Attachment 6: Distribution and Status of Contracted Staff

Table 3. Current Contracted Call Center Staffing Levels

Position	Staff
Call Center Manager	1
QA/Trainer	1
Supervisors	13
Active Eligibility Associates	115
Inactive Staff/On Leave	6
Total	136

Data provided by Public Consulting Group, March 4, 2025

***Position Descriptions:**

Call Center Manager: The Call Center Manager oversees high-level operations of the call center, ensuring efficient workflows, staffing, and adherence to service goals. The role focuses on performance management, Human Relations (HR) responsibilities, and coordinating scheduling to maintain optimal staff coverage. The Call Center Manager directly oversees each of the Eligibility Supervisors.

Quality Assurance Manager/Trainer: The Quality Assurance Manager/Trainer is responsible for monitoring staff performance, maintaining service quality standards, and delivering training to ensure consistent adherence to policies and procedures. This role focuses on developing training materials, conducting evaluations, and providing feedback to improve individual and team performance. This role also ensures Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are accurate and comprehensive.

Supervisors: The role of supervisor oversees the day-to-day activities of the call center staff, providing guidance, support, and real-time problem solving to ensure productivity and service standards are met. This role includes monitoring performance, addressing escalations, and assisting with scheduling and workload management.

Active Eligibility Associates: The Eligibility Associates are responsible for handling client inquiries regarding program eligibility, providing guidance on application processes, and resolving issues related to benefit documentation. This role ensures customers receive quality and timely communication to clients while maintaining compliance with program policies and service standards. Examples of associates' administrative functions that do not require discretion include intake of applications, renewal forms, and income or resource verifications; follow up on requests sent by the state agency (e.g., calling to collect missing information); call center support to help provide status updates on application or renewal submissions; and other administrative tasks.

Inactive Staff/On Leave: *Inactive staff refers to team members who are not currently engaged in active duties, assignments, or schedules, either temporarily or permanently. Staff members classified “on leave” are temporarily absent from their duties due to personal, medical, or other leave arrangements.*

Attachment 7: Training and Staffing

Introduction: The Division of Public Assistance is currently engaged in intensive training programs to address staffing needs and improve efficiency in eligibility case processing. This report outlines the training timelines, cohort details, and staffing outcomes, supplemented by data on new hires, recruitment efforts, and Position Control Number (PCN) statuses.

Training Overview: The main training program running at present is the Modified Adjusted Gross Income Medicaid (MAGI)/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) training, which spans ten weeks from onboarding to readiness for production. The timeline is structured as follows:

- **Week 1:** Division orientation
- **Week 2:** System preparation—familiarization with operational systems
- **Weeks 3-4:** Virtual instructor-led training for MAGI
- **Weeks 5-6:** On-the-job (OJT) training for MAGI processing, transitioning to SNAP
- **Weeks 7-8:** Virtual instructor-led training for SNAP
- **Weeks 9-10:** OJT for SNAP and MAGI/SNAP processing

By Week 10, staff are expected to independently handle cases, albeit with some assistance.

Adult Public Assistance (APA) training is a two-week course. Week one is virtual instructor led and week two is OJT processing cases. This training builds on skills learned in the MAGI and SNAP trainings, introducing new policy and procedures specific to the APA program.

Heating Assistance (HAP) is an online course that staff can access as needed.

Instructors currently conducting MAGI/SNAP Virtual Instructor-Led Trainings (VILTs) and On-the-Job Trainings (OJTs) will transition into new roles as in-office trainers. These instructors will be embedded in field offices, working in collaboration with office leadership teams to provide in-person training and support to staff.

In this new capacity, instructors will expand their focus beyond onboarding new hires to supporting all staff in their assigned locations. They will also serve as a direct conduit for information between the Division of Public Assistance's Learning and Development team and the field, helping to improve training accessibility and strengthen communication across offices.

As a result of this transition, the Division may discontinue the VILT model and instead utilize in-office instructors to deliver training on demand, based on office-specific hiring needs. This change will offer greater flexibility in meeting workforce demands.

This shift is part of a broader overhaul of the Division's training approach. The next phase includes implementation of a redesigned, modular training curriculum housed on AspireAlaska, the state's learning management system. This updated format will allow staff to progress through materials at their own pace and revisit training content as needed. The new MAGI and SNAP training curriculum is expected to launch by mid-summer 2025.

Current Training Cohorts:

Training Start Date	Training Name	Number of Staff in Training	Completion Date	Staff Available to Work Cases Post-Training
11/4/2024	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 1]	10	01/10/2025 - completed	8*
11/18/2024	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 2]	9	01/24/2025 - completed	9
11/18/2024	Workload [cohort 1]	3	12/13/2025	3
12/16/2024	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 3]	8	03/05/2025 – final test delayed due to internet outage	8
01/27/2025	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 4]	9	04/11/2025	9
02/03/2025	APA/ APME[cohort 1]	7	02/14/2025	7
01/13/2025	Workload [cohort 2a]	2	02/21/2025	2
01/27/2025	Workload [cohort 2b]	2	03/07/2025	2
03/1/2025	HAP – online	Up to 7	04/1/2025	Up to 7
02/12/2025	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 5]	6	05/02/2025	6
TBD	APA/APME [cohort 2]	TBD	TBD	TBD
TBD – if needed	MAGI/SNAP [cohort 6]	TBD	TBD	TBD***

Data provided by Chief of DPA Learning & Development, 03/04/2025

**One student from Cohort 1 is finishing with Cohort 2 due to pre-approved leave, and another is an Eligibility Operations Manager (EOM).*

****Some vacant PCNs are in different stages of recruitment and have not been included elsewhere.*